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Revised security management framework and revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 under section 5, Peacekeeping operations, related to a strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the revised security management framework and revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 under section 5, Peacekeeping operations, related to a strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations (A/65/320 and Corr.1). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification.

I. Revised framework for accountability for the United Nations security management system

2. Section I of the report of the Secretary-General, which was submitted pursuant to paragraph 139 of General Assembly resolution 64/243, provides background information on the development of the framework for accountability for the United Nations security management system, gives an overview of the most recent revisions to the framework and describes the efforts currently under way to replace the current security phase system with a new security level system.

3. In paragraphs 3 and 4 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, following the attack on the United Nations premises in Algiers in 2007, the Independent Panel on the Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide highlighted the need for a review of the framework for accountability in order to identify where further clarity might be needed. Accordingly, on the basis of guidance from both the United Nations System Chief

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Executives Board for Coordination and its High-level Committee on Management, the framework was extensively reviewed and updated by the Department of Safety and Security and the steering group of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network before being endorsed by the Chief Executives Board in early October 2009. The full text of the revised framework for accountability is attached to the report of the Secretary-General as annex I.

4. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the 10 points set out in paragraph 7, subparagraphs (a) to (j), of the report of the Secretary-General represented the most significant revisions to the framework for accountability, and that the revisions reflected the change in organizational culture described in the new mission statement for the United Nations security management system (see A/65/320 and Corr.1, annex I, sect. B). That statement, which was based on the principle of "how to stay" (as opposed to "when to leave"), indicated that the goal of the security management system was to enable the United Nations to conduct its activities while ensuring the safety, security and well-being of personnel and the security of United Nations premises and assets. Given that staff members were the primary enablers of United Nations programmes, keeping them safe while they worked, including in high-threat areas, was the most important contribution of the security management system to programme delivery.

5. The Advisory Committee was further informed that the revised framework acknowledged, for the first time, that continued programme delivery meant that there would always be some residual risk. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes that the revised framework states that "in accepting responsibility and accountability for security management, the United Nations recognizes that fatalities and/or casualties may occur, even though appropriate efforts are being made and measures implemented to reduce to an acceptable level the risks to its personnel, premises and assets" (see A/65/320 and Corr.1, annex I, sect. A, para. 4).

6. Section D of the accountability framework clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all the actors in the security management system, ranging from the Secretary-General, who, as chief administrative officer of the Organization, is accountable to Member States for the overall safety and security of United Nations personnel, premises and assets at headquarters and field locations, to local security assistants, who are recruited at the country level and provide assistance in preparing security risk assessments, minimum operating security standards and minimum operating residential security standards and in monitoring the implementation of security policies and procedures (ibid., sect. D, paras. 8, 25 and 26). More detailed information on the specific roles and responsibilities of all the actors referred to in the framework is set out in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General.

7. The revised accountability framework indicates, inter alia, that designated officials for security are appointed by the Secretary-General, and accredited as such to the host Government, in each country or designated area where the United Nations is present. The designated official is accountable to the Secretary-General, through the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security, and is responsible for the security of United Nations personnel, premises and assets throughout the country or designated area (ibid., para. 13). The Advisory Committee notes, however, that some actors mentioned in the framework, in particular single-agency security officers and personnel employed by organizations of the United Nations system, do not appear to have a direct reporting line to the designated official. It

was explained to the Committee, upon enquiry, that field missions tended to operate in a "networked security environment", where information on security matters was shared horizontally as well as vertically. Thus, while single-agency security officers, for example, reported to the executive head of their respective organizations rather than directly to the designated official, they were also responsible for supporting the designated official through coordination with the chief security adviser/security adviser.

8. In section I.C of his report, the Secretary-General gives an overview of the new security level system, which, on the recommendation of the Independent Panel, is to replace the existing security phase system. The Secretary-General states, inter alia, that the new security level system is designed to support the broader United Nations security risk management process. It is a tool that can accurately and transparently reflect the specific threat-based security environment in which the United Nations system operates, and is based on a structured threat assessment with standardized categories of threats that can be evaluated using standardized variables in a uniform way, thereby allowing the same technical analytical process to be applied worldwide.

9. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with detailed information on the rationale behind the introduction of the new security level system, the methodology used for its development and testing and the implementation schedule. In brief, the Committee was informed that the new system was based on an analysis of threats and hazards, which were evaluated using the above-mentioned structured threat assessment. The threat assessment employed five general categories, namely four threats (armed conflict, terrorism, crime and civil unrest) and hazards. Since some threats, at their most serious, were more dangerous to the United Nations than others, each category was assigned a different weight so that the resulting security level better reflected reality. Each threat or hazard category was examined separately and broken down into three components (intent, capability and inhibiting context for threats, and history, intensity/severity and warning/preparedness for hazards). A value, determined on the basis of facts on the ground and professional judgement, was assigned to each of the three components. The weighted scores for each category were then added up and used to determine the security level. The new system comprised six levels, numbered from 1 to 6 (minimal to extreme). There was no level zero because the system was designed to acknowledge that some latent threat existed in even the safest environments.

10. The Advisory Committee notes from the information provided to it that the security levels are intended to serve as the starting points for management actions, and that the new system de-links the determination of security levels from administrative and financial decisions by removing security measures (relocation, evacuation) and security-related entitlements (hazard pay) that were previously triggered automatically by the declaration of certain security phases. A table summarizing the six levels of the new system, the recommended management actions and the relevant level of authority and oversight is attached to the present report (see annex).

11. As the Secretary-General indicates in paragraphs 12 to 20 of his report, the new security level system has been pilot tested in Colombia, Israel/West Bank/Gaza, Kenya, Somalia and the Sudan and is being implemented in three stages. The new system is due to become fully operational on 1 January 2011. Upon enquiry,

representatives of the Secretary-General confirmed that the Department of Safety and Security was on track to complete implementation by that date.

12. Paragraphs 21 and 22 of the report of the Secretary-General provide information on guidelines for acceptable risk, which have been developed in support of the "how to stay" paradigm and describe how the Organization can accept higher levels of residual risk when there is a need to implement vital programmes. The guidelines were pilot tested in five locations at the same time as the security level system. The Secretary-General indicates that, while feedback from the pilot test participants was very positive, it was recognized that the part of the model dealing with determining "programme criticality" required clear definitions and the establishment of a clear framework for decision-making. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that an assessment of programme criticality in high-risk areas entailed ascertaining exactly who was on the ground and what they were doing with a view to balancing the value of the programme against the additional risk required to deliver it.

13. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 22 of the report of the Secretary-General that the High-level Committee on Management has established a separate working group to study the issue of programme criticality. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the working group was composed of representatives of the member organizations of the Chief Executives Board with large field operations (namely the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme), as well as representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Safety and Security and the Department of Field Support. The working group had been tasked with defining the levels of programme criticality and developing a common framework for decision-making within the guidelines for acceptable risk, and was due to present its recommendations to the High-level Committee on Management at its 2011 spring session.

14. **The Advisory Committee considers that the shift in institutional mindset from a "when to leave" to a "how to stay" approach imposes far greater managerial responsibility on those taking security-related decisions, since the operational success of its main component, the security level system, depends on (a) the security adviser (or other relevant official) carrying out a reliable quantitative threat assessment and (b) those responsible for taking security-related decisions ensuring that all actors on the ground are confident that appropriate measures calibrated to the specific threat/hazard level are being properly implemented.**

15. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that greater managerial responsibility requires clearer lines of accountability, particularly in situations where lives may be at risk. In this connection, the Committee welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Department of Safety and Security and the steering group of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network to review and update the framework for accountability and recommends that the General Assembly take note of it. However, the Committee notes that, while the revised**

framework clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all actors in the United Nations security management system, as well as their reporting relationships, it does not refer to the consequences of non-compliance. The Committee trusts that existing mechanisms for monitoring managerial performance will be applied to address any shortcomings.

16. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of the guidelines for acceptable risk as an important part of the security risk management process. Mindful of the need for accountability at all stages of that process, the Committee trusts that the work currently under way on the question of programme criticality will result in a common framework for decision-making that indicates, inter alia, who is responsible for taking such decisions.**

II. Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 under section 5, Peacekeeping operations

17. Part II of the report of the Secretary-General is submitted pursuant to section VI, paragraph 3, of General Assembly resolution 64/245, in which the Assembly endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee relating to additional emergency resources to enhance the level of security for United Nations staff working in Afghanistan and other high-threat locations.

18. In paragraphs 25 and 26 of his report, the Secretary-General states that, following recent attacks in Pakistan, the Department of Safety and Security determined that the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was vulnerable. According to the Secretary-General, a security assessment conducted at the headquarters compound in Islamabad indicated that, in order to address current security challenges, enhanced measures should be implemented in the form of immediate improvements to the physical security of the headquarters compound and the hiring of additional security staff. In paragraph 30 of his report, the Secretary-General further states that the additional resource requirements have been identified as essential for staff security. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that most of the resources requested were one-time costs.

19. The additional requirements for security enhancements are estimated as follows:

(a) $147,700 for two additional posts: one Chief Security Officer at the P-4 level and one Security Information Assistant at the Local level. According to the Secretary-General, the two proposed posts would strengthen the security management structure of the mission, bringing it to the level required for staff safety and security as determined by the Department of Safety and Security. The Security Information Assistant would assist in the collection and management of security-related information. The Chief Security Officer would advise the Head of UNMOGIP on security matters, interact with local Pakistani security authorities and provide leadership on the full range of security tasks needed to support the mission (see A/65/320, para. 31). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that a P-4 level post was needed to ensure high-level professional leadership on security matters;

(b) $615,000 for furniture and equipment, comprising $420,000 for three armoured trucks and $195,000 for 130 flak jackets and helmets. The Secretary-General indicates that the armoured trucks, two of which would be based in Islamabad and one in Srinagar, would be critical in mitigating vulnerability during road movements, especially in areas where there could be roadside bombs and planned attacks. The flak jackets and helmets would replace existing equipment that is inadequate for the increased threat level (ibid., para. 32);

(c) $2,396,000 for improvement of premises at the headquarters compound in Islamabad, comprising $1,450,600 for the replacement of existing porta-cabin exterior walls and roofs with a more durable structural external membrane (stainless steel); $459,000 for the construction of a safe room and a concrete brick wall facade for protection from the effects of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices; $337,200 for the purchase of a firefighting system; and $149,200 for the installation of Hesco bastions, a reinforced main gate, additional perimeter lighting and biometric movement access control (ibid., para. 33).

20. The action to be taken by the General Assembly is set out in paragraph 35 of the report of the Secretary-General. **While the Advisory Committee has long held the view that a piecemeal approach to the budget process is undesirable, it recognizes the exceptional and urgent nature of this particular request. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly approve the establishment, effective 1 January 2011, of the two new posts (one P-4 and one Local level) referred to in paragraph 19 (a) above, and appropriate a total amount of $3,181,100 under the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, comprising increases under section 5, Peacekeeping operations, and section 35, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.**

Annex

Table summarizing the six levels of the new security level system, the recommended management actions and the relevant level of authority and oversight

Security level	*Recommended management actions*	*Authority*	*Level of oversight*
6 Extreme	• Security management team meets *at least* weekly (at discretion of designated official) • Re-evaluation of staffing needs and security clearance based on the acceptable-risk model and the new concept of operations and security plan • External security clearance approved by the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security	Secretary-General	
5 High	• Security management team meets *at least* weekly (at discretion of designated official) • Re-evaluation of staffing needs and security clearance based on the acceptable-risk model (staff in non-critical posts relocated/evacuated) • Security clearance required	Designated official	Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security (validation within 24 hours)
4 Substantial	• Security management team meets *at least* weekly (at discretion of designated official) • Re-evaluation of staffing needs and security clearance based on the acceptable-risk model • Security clearance required • No external conferences	Designated official	Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security (validation within 24 hours)
3 Moderate	• Security management team meets *at least* monthly • Security clearance required • External conferences must be authorized by the designated official	Designated official	Director of the Division of Regional Operations, Department of Safety and Security (validation within 24 hours)

Security level	*Recommended management actions*	*Authority*	*Level of oversight*
2 Low	• Security management team meets *at least* twice a year • Security clearance system put in place • Organizers of external conferences must notify the designated official	Designated official	Director of the Division of Regional Operations, Department of Safety and Security (validation within 24 hours)
1 Minimal	• Security management team meets *at least* twice a year • Notification of all official travel	Designated official	Director of the Division of Regional Operations, Department of Safety and Security